


Building a Solid 

# Brand

Colorado  
State  
University

A group of four young adults, two men and two women, are gathered outdoors, smiling and looking at a silver laptop. The woman in the foreground has long blonde hair and is wearing a green tank top. The man next to her has short dark hair and is wearing a red t-shirt. The woman behind her has dark hair and is wearing a green top. The man behind her has short dark hair and is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. They are all smiling and appear to be engaged in a collaborative activity. The background shows a light-colored building and green trees.

**A brand is built through  
the total experience that  
it offers.**

# Brand

## What Is It and Why Is It Important?



Logo usage. Color schemes. Name. Vision. Mission. Design style of University publications. While these elements are all vital to upholding the University's brand, they are only part of the equation. Sophisticated brands involve much more than a visual identity and an insightful mission statement.

Brands are the **expectations** that stakeholders associate with your university and your services. A brand is not only who you are and what you deliver, but also how you deliver it. The key to effective branding is consistency: offering the same value, level of service, and consistent messaging to your audiences over time. At the core of every brand is a **pledge** to those you serve – a promise to do or offer something unique or compelling. This brand promise serves as a **strategic guide** within the University – in marketing communications and in the planning and the delivery of research, educational support, and outreach services.

The strongest brands build an **emotional bond** with stakeholders, creating a sense of **loyalty** and ultimately influencing how constituents interact with you now and well into the future. The CSU brand has three entities – Colorado State University, CSU-Pueblo, and CSU-Global Campus – that all relate to one another and to their own target audiences to form a coordinated **identity**. Drawing upon the history, reach, and **reputation** of Colorado State University as the cornerstone of the brand, each CSU entity has the opportunity to create success in its own distinct market.





All entities gain credibility because of their association with a strong **core brand** (Colorado State University), while also highlighting their own unique capabilities. Consider the corporate arena of Pepsi-Cola. While Pepsi is the core brand, a series of brands are part of the Pepsi family – Diet, Wild Cherry, One – achieving their own success within their respective niche markets. This **shared vision** of Colorado State University's common beliefs – across campuses – provides balance and provides a set of **core values** that brings all entities together under a core CSU name.

# Building

## Colorado State's Reputation

➔ By consistently incorporating Colorado State University brand messages in our communications – through print and online marketing materials, our actions, and our outreach – we continue to improve the status and reputation of the University, showing the public that we do, in fact, deliver what we promise. That they can trust us. That we have integrity.

Each time constituents come in contact with a CSU brochure, event, Web page, or even a faculty or staff member, they naturally form and reshape their opinions of Colorado State University. When they encounter **consistent approaches** and delivery of services, stakeholders feel a sense of familiarity and **confidence**. The end result: increased **credibility** and University standing. All employees shape the CSU brand through their actions, comments, and messages to stakeholders. Your support of the brand has a direct impact on raising the **prestige** of CSU.

The Brand

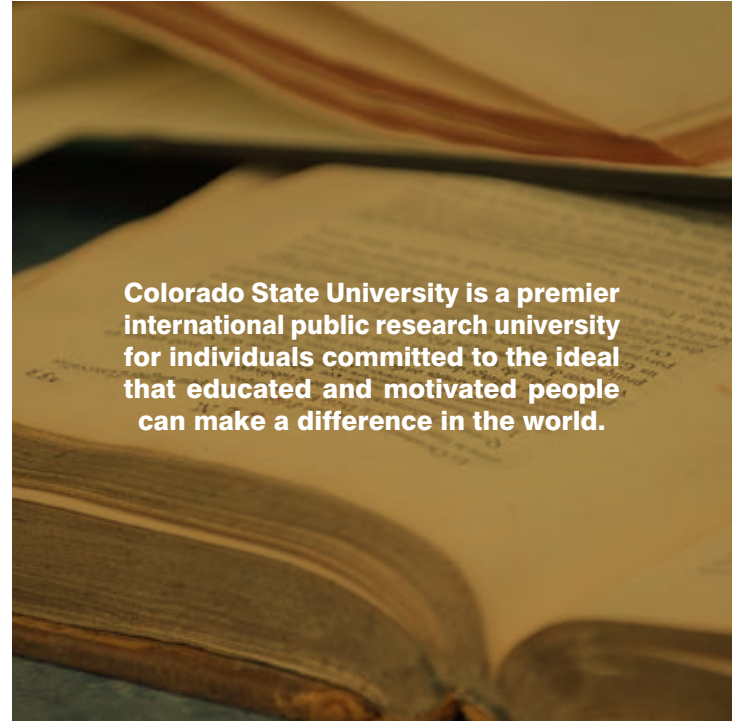
# Promise

Learning.  
Discovery.  
Impact.

At the heart of your actions and communication considerations is the brand promise to Colorado State University's stakeholders: an enduring **internal statement** of what CSU stands for and what we promise to deliver to every individual with whom we come in contact. Simply stated, CSU promises every student that **learning** can lead to **discovery** and that discovery can and will make a difference – an **impact** – in this world. To apply the brand promise, ask: **How does my college or unit advance this promise?**

# The Brand Position

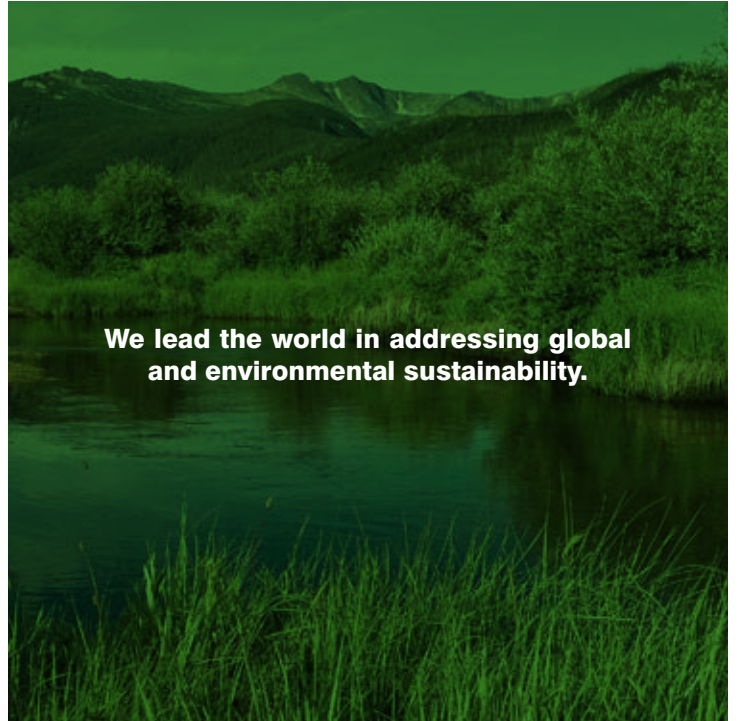
➔ Colorado State University's multifaceted brand positioning statement further reinforces the brand promise, explaining who CSU is and what the University does, specifically, to deliver on that promise. To apply the positioning statement to your actions and in communications, ask: **In which of these areas does my unit play the largest role? How? Be specific.**



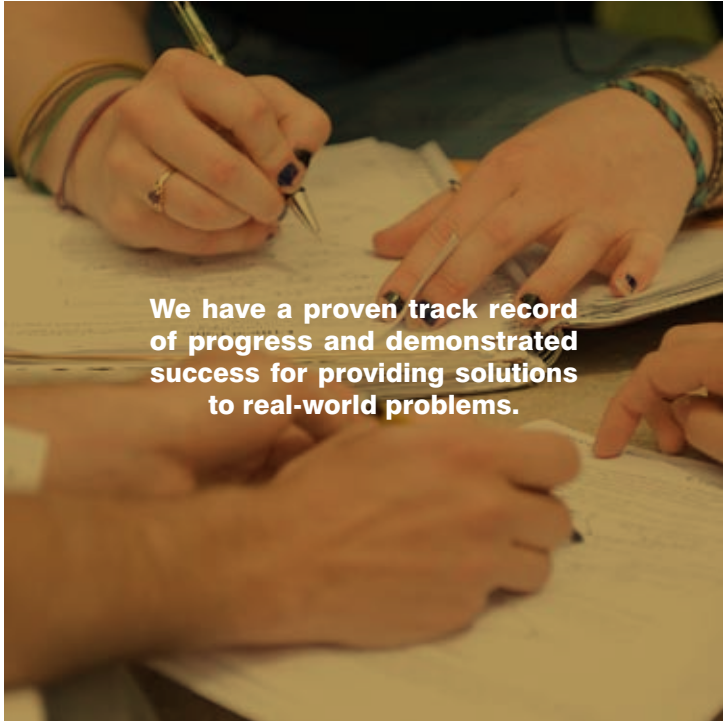




**Our expert research faculty collaborate with students in the classroom and in the field to tap their highest potential and deploy practical solutions to society's great challenges.**



**We lead the world in addressing global and environmental sustainability.**



# The Brand Drivers

➔ The brand drivers are the key differentiating points that make Colorado State University stand out from the competition. When executing initiatives or communicating about your unit, we encourage you to make these bragging points a reality by creating programs and highlighting individuals that exhibit these ideals. To apply the drivers, ask: **In what ways does my unit exemplify the drivers? How can my unit distinguish itself through these drivers to our stakeholders?**





**A commitment to reaching out to communities and the world to make a difference.**

**Accomplished faculty leading their fields who work collaboratively with students.**





**Practical, hands-on, advanced learning that leads to career-ready graduates.**





**Deep expertise and a firm commitment  
to advancing global and environmental  
sustainability.**



The Brand

# Demeanor

➔ It's the University's attitude – how we go about accomplishing our goals. How we want to project ourselves and be perceived. When you personally reach out to constituents or develop a new proposal, adopt those Colorado State University characteristics that make us who we are. To enhance the brand demeanor, ask: **Do our stakeholders describe my unit and my University this way? How can my unit consistently reflect these attributes through our actions?**

Confident  
Pragmatic  
Dynamic  
Engaging  
Global  
Standard-Setting  
Innovative



This guide is designed to help you align your efforts with the Colorado State University brand. Whether you are developing a communiqué, proposal, or brochure; planning an event or presentation; or creating policies or programs, this manual can help you produce communications and inspire actions that fully represent the University's ideals and character.



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